



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

August 28, 2015

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SFWMD Prepares for Potential Tropical Storm Erika Impacts *Water managers will provide updates as necessary via email, website and Twitter*



(Click on the graphic to view the District's Emergency Management Twitter feed.)

West Palm Beach, FL — In advance of potential heavy rainfall from Tropical Storm Erika, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) has prepared the regional flood control system to reduce flooding where possible.

“This agency was created in 1949 to operate what has become a \$13 billion regional flood control system serving more than 8 million people,” said Jeff Kivett, SFWMD Director of Operations, Engineering and Construction. “We are making final preparations to move stormwater in advance of the storm while also balancing the need to store water for future supply.”

Canals and water control structures in key areas of South Florida’s system were placed in the low range Friday afternoon, and adjustments will be made as necessary. Water managers are also operating the system to enhance the ability of local and community drainage facilities to route excess runoff into the District’s regional canal system.

Water levels and flows are monitored around the clock by field staff and the District’s advanced Operations Control Room in West Palm Beach.

Pre-storm preparations by the District include:

- Lowering canal levels in key areas to make room for moving water
- Inspecting the flood control system
- Ensuring adequate fuel supplies for pump stations and other equipment
- Ready staff and equipment for storm assignments
- Strapping down equipment and closing storm shutters at facilities
- Conference calls with local drainage districts that connect to SFWMD canals

The SFWMD is also coordinating information with the state Emergency Operations Center as well as federal and local partners, including the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

SFWMD Updates

The District will provide media updates via online and social media during the weekend and as necessary related to the storm, including:

- Email press releases
- www.sfwmd.gov website
- [@SFWMD_EM](https://twitter.com/SFWMD_EM) Twitter emergency management account

Briefings will also be held if needed.

Year-Round Maintenance

Throughout the year, the District carries out a robust program to ensure the regional flood control system operates at its full potential. The program includes routine inspection and maintenance of water control structures, clearing canals of debris and exotic vegetation, strengthening canal banks and other improvements.

As a reminder, complete flood-proofing is not possible in South Florida given the potential for excessive rainfall from storm events.

Residents are urged to review their emergency plans and supplies and stay clear of water control structures, where there may be a rapid water flow even before a storm.

Useful Storm Links

- [Radar & Satellite Images](#)
- [Hurricane Tracking/Tropical Storm Forecast](#)
- [Hurricane and Storm Models](#)
- FloridaDisaster.org

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About the South Florida Water Management District

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state – 16 counties from Orlando to the Keys. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. The agency mission is to manage

and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. A key initiative is cleanup and restoration of the Everglades.